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NEW HART CEO MEETS WITH FTA, HAWAII'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION IN WASHINGTON D.C.

(March 27, 2012)— Newly selected HART CEO and Executive Director Daniel Grabauskas met with the head of the Federal Transit Administration and with Hawaii's congressional delegation in Washington D.C. today to discuss the status of Honolulu's rail project in preparation for receiving additional federal funds.

Grabauskas, who officially begins his new role on April 9, and interim HART executive director Toru Hamayasu met with FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff, U.S. Sens. Daniel K. Inouye and Daniel Akaka, and U.S. Reps. Mazie Hirono and Colleen Hanabusa to discuss the expected full-funding grant agreement, which provides \$1.55 billion in federal money for the rail project.

Honolulu's transit project has already been allotted \$120 million of those funds and the project is poised to receive a share of \$510 million this fiscal year. President Obama's FY2013 budget also includes \$250 million for the project.

Grabauskas said the meeting with the FTA went well and that FTA Administrator Rogoff reiterated comments made two weeks ago by U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood underscoring that the agency is committed to the project and committed to the funding.

"FTA administrator Peter Rogoff and Hawaii's congressional delegation reaffirmed their strong commitment to Honolulu's rail project, and we assured them our project is on track and well positioned to receive full federal funding," Grabauskas said. "Honolulu is fortunate to have such strong support from our entire congressional delegation, the FTA and the Obama Administration. Our federal partners understand that we are not just building a rail project, we are building a better future for Oahu."

Grabauskas, who is preparing to move from Boston to Honolulu, said he decided to visit with federal officials while still on the East Coast because it was more cost effective and would allow him to hit the ground running when he arrives in Honolulu.

“The Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation is very fortunate to have Daniel Grabauskas as their chief executive officer and executive director. I am very impressed with him,” Senator Daniel K. Inouye said. “He has an impressive resume and a lot of experience with this type of work through his leadership of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority in Boston. I look forward to working with him and I will continue to support this project and work hard to secure federal resources to ensure its timely completion.”

“In Daniel Grabauskas, HART is gaining a highly qualified transportation professional who is dedicated to collaborating with our local communities. I look forward to working with him as we move ahead in building a new alternative to getting around Oahu — one that provides a new travel option that allows people to avoid driving on clogged roads and freeways,” said Senator Daniel K. Akaka.

“Dan Grabauskas understands the challenges and opportunities Oahu faces when it comes to addressing the traffic gridlock and quality of life issues of a growing population,” said Congresswoman Mazie Hirono, a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. “I congratulate Dan on his new position as HART chief executive officer and wish him and his team success as they move the project forward.”

Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa said, “I look forward to working with Mr. Grabauskas as the Honolulu Rail Transit Project progresses and helping Hawaii secure its fair share of federal funding. We must ensure this historic transportation project is completed in a responsible and timely manner, and that will truly take a collective effort.”

As the new chief executive of HART, Grabauskas will run the agency responsible for the construction, operation and maintenance of the \$5.2 billion rail project. The HART board selected him as the new CEO/executive director on March 1.

The 20-mile rail transit system from East Kapolei to Ala Moana is expected to open in 2019. For updates on construction work days and times and more details about the project, visit the project website at www.honolulutransit.org or contact our hotline at 566-2299.

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